

Obituary

Sir W. BENTLEY PURCHASE, C.B.E., M.C., M.B.
D.P.H.

Sir Bentley Purchase, H.M. Coroner for the Borough of Ipswich and lecturer in forensic medicine at University College Hospital and St. Thomas's Hospital Medical Schools, died as a result of an accidental fall from the roof of his house on September 27 at the age of 70. A prominent and admired member of the medical and legal professions he was formerly Coroner for the Northern District of London and also to the Queen's Household.

William Bentley Purchase was born on December 31, 1890, only son of the late Sir William Henry Purchase,



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and was educated at Bradfield and Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge. After taking his B.A. in 1911 he went to the London Hospital Medical College, where he qualified in 1914. During the 1914-18 war he served first as a "gunner" and then medical officer and was awarded the M.C. in 1917 and the Order of the White Eagle of Serbia in 1921. On his return to London he studied at University College Hospital and graduated M.B. at Cambridge in 1921, having taken the D.P.H. there in the

previous year. He also read Law and was called to the Bar in 1919 as a Member of the Inner Temple, where he practised until 1930, being Treasury Counsel at the County of London Sessions (1924 to 1930) and appearing in, among other cases, the Croydon arsenic case. The period during which his work brought him into most prominence was when he was sitting as Coroner at St. Pancras (1930 to 1959), where he was closely associated with the late Sir Bernard Spilsbury. He was appointed C.B.E. in 1949 and knighted in 1958.

Purchase was a man of enormous energy and catholic in his interests, the only consideration in his mind being to produce something worth while, as can be seen from the varied duties that he undertook—including being secretary of the Coroners Society, consultant to the War Office on chemical warfare, a member of the Royal Commission on Abortion, a member of the board of governors of University College Hospital, chairman of St. Helen's Hospital Management Committee, a member of the Board of Advanced Studies in Medicine of the University of London, lecturer in civil law for the Supply and Accountant Officer courses of the Royal Navy, and lecturer in forensic medicine at the Royal Free Hospital Medical School (to the Student Union of which he used to give his lecture fees). He wrote much, mostly in connexion with coroners and legal medicine, being the author of *Practical Forensic Medicine* (jointly), *Aids to Forensic Medicine* (13th edition), and contributing to Halsbury's *Statutes of England*. He edited Lushington's *Affiliation and Bastardy*, and, with H. Wollaston, *Jervis on Coroners* (9th edition). Although giving some indication of his work, this does not really do full justice to Purchase, for he could be truly included in that rare category of great men whose known activities represent only a small part of what they contributed to medicine, the law, and their country. He was far too modest and discreet to tell it himself. Glimpses were revealed when he talked about the part he played in the famous wartime incident of "the man who never was," but even these activities were small

in comparison with the personal acts of kindness which he performed. For essentially he was a kind man—no witness in his court was treated with other than the utmost courtesy and nobody who had a genuine personal problem ever left him without help. This was coupled with an immense loyalty to those who worked for him, a characteristic which nevertheless was never overdone should anybody do "an act" of which he ethically disapproved.

His outspokenness required a courage few can muster; he had no hesitation in saying what he thought. At the same time he never let his prejudices interfere with appreciation of something well done. This was well shown by his disapproval of any attack on Spilsbury in the later part of his career, and although still appreciating the technical ability of the critics he was quite unforgiving concerning the merit of the attack. This was probably the clue to his character, a strong sense of loyalty and generosity with an inflexible ethical standard. It was a unique experience to hear him in court cross-examining so-called experts in their own subject from his almost inexhaustible store of knowledge. It was perhaps for this reason that those who knew him experienced no surprise at the manner of his death—typical of a man who insisted on doing things himself because he knew he could do them better than most and hence stimulate those around him to excel themselves.

Legal medicine certainly owes him a great debt and medicine itself much for his influence on the coroner system of the country and for his other activities, both official and unofficial.

He leaves a wife, son, and daughter, to whom we offer our sincere sympathy.—F. E. C.

CLIFFORD E. ROBERTS, O.B.E., B.M., B.Ch.
F.R.C.S.Ed., D.T.M.&H.

Mr. Clifford E. Roberts, who was medical superintendent at Hammersmith Hospital, died suddenly some days after an operation on September 25, at the age of 61. He had been at Hammersmith for only three years, but had come with a distinguished career behind him.

Clifford Ellis Roberts, who was born on November 11, 1899, served in the first world war before going up to Oxford as a medical student. He completed his training at the London Hospital, taking both the Conjoint Diploma and the B.M., B.Ch. degrees in 1925. He did his resident appointments at the London and Poplar Hospitals and in 1927 joined the Colonial Medical Service in Uganda. He took the D.T.M.&H. and the Certificate of the London School of Tropical Medicine (with Distinction) in 1930 and was promoted district medical officer. As well as being medical officer to the European and Asiatic hospitals in Uganda, he was for a time acting surgical specialist and tutor in anatomy and surgery at the Medical School in Mulago. As a sequel to this he took the F.R.C.S.Ed. in 1936, and in 1939 was transferred to Zanzibar as a specialist officer. During this period of his career he contributed original papers to the *East African Medical Journal*. Having been honorary secretary and president of the Uganda Branch of the B.M.A., he was later president of the Zanzibar Branch.

During the second world war he served with the East African Army Medical Corps and was surgeon first to No. 2 Casualty Clearing Station and later to No. 6 Hospital at Mombasa, to which he became O.C. He was ultimately O.C. of the Surgical Division, No. 1 Hospital, Nairobi. He then transferred to South-east Asia Command and went to Ceylon as commanding officer of the Zanzibar Field Ambulance and served in Assam and Burma, being mentioned in dispatches. Demobilized in 1945 at the request of the Zanzibar Government, he was appointed O.B.E. in the same year. He acted for a time as Senior Medical Officer in Zanzibar and was a member of the Legislative and Executive Councils until he retired for family reasons, when he was awarded the Brilliant Star of Zanzibar.

Having left the Colonial Medical Service he joined the Ministry of Pensions as surgical officer at Musgrove Park

Hospital, where he became senior medical officer in charge in 1949. In 1952 he was transferred to Chapel Allerton Hospital as medical superintendent, making a lasting impression there because his professional competence was combined with an exceptional personality. He came to Hammersmith in 1958: it was a difficult appointment, for medical administration did not then rank as high in lay circles as it had done twenty years before. But again his calm competence, his kindliness, his understanding of people, his willingness to listen and to help impressed everyone, lay and medical alike. He was such a nice person. Maybe no one is irreplaceable, but there are some, a few, whom everyone wishes could still go on, and of that small and desirable company "Dr. Roberts" was a conspicuous member.—C. E. N.

A. T. A. JURASZ, M.D., Hon.F.R.C.S.

Professor Anthoni Jurasz died suddenly in New York on September 20 in his 79th year. He was dean of the Polish School of Medicine established in Edinburgh in the early days of the second world war.

Sir SYDNEY SMITH writes: Anthoni Thomas Alexander Jurasz was educated at Heidelberg, where his father was professor of laryngology, and there obtained the degree of Doctor of Medicine in 1907. He later became professor of surgery at the University of Poznan, where his father, in retirement, had undertaken the organization of a laryngological clinic. On the outbreak of the second world war he joined the Polish Medical Corps and was captured by the Germans. Making his escape to France, he came on to Britain, being finally posted to Scotland with a great number of his compatriots. In the Polish Army thus posted there was a great excess of medical men, many of professional rank, who were gradually deteriorating owing to the dearth of medical work. In addition to these medical officers there were many senior medical men as well as numbers of medical students in the ranks. Jurasz took the matter up with the Army authorities and with the University of Edinburgh, and after a great deal of negotiation, in which he played the leading part, the University of Edinburgh agreed to provide facilities first for postgraduate training for the Polish medical officers and later a complete system of training for their medical students. The Government of Poland agreed with the University to give the Polish Faculty of Medicine power to examine and give degrees in medicine and surgery which would be recognized by the Polish Government for medical registration in Poland.

At that time Poland had been overrun by the Germans and the universities systematically destroyed. The idea was to get a complete school of medicine properly equipped so that on the completion of hostilities the whole school—teachers, scholars, and equipment—could be transferred to Poland and start work at once. This was not to be, owing to political developments which had not been foreseen.

Jurasz, as the first dean of the Polish Faculty, carried out all the preliminary work of arranging class teaching and hospital practice, and never was there such a dynamo of energy. He held the chair of surgery in the Polish School and was elected an Honorary Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons of England in 1942. In addition to his administrative work he was the prime mover in the establishment of the Paderewski Hospital for the treatment of his compatriots and the training of Polish students. Further, he found time to play a leading part in the social life of his students, and became the trusted friend of a great number of his Scottish colleagues. By 1946, when the school was closed, 228 students had received their M.B. degree and 19 had proceeded to the M.D. Professor Jurasz then went to the United States and practised in New York until his death. He paid a fleeting visit to Edinburgh in August and seemed as full of vigour and fun as of yore, and we were all stunned to hear of his death shortly after his arrival back in New York. He is survived by his wife, to whom we extend all our sympathy.

J. F. MacCARTHY, M.B., Ch.B.

Dr. J. F. MacCarthy, who held an appointment as a chest physician in Sheffield, died on September 11 when on holiday in Ireland. He was 51 years of age.

Jeremiah Francis MacCarthy was born in Cork and after studying medicine there he graduated M.B., Ch.B. in 1935. He came to Sheffield in the same year and after holding house appointments at the Sheffield Royal Infirmary he became assistant medical officer at the City General Hospital, Sheffield, and later deputy medical superintendent at Kilton Hall Hospital, Worksop. He joined the R.A.F. in 1938 as a regular officer and served most of the war years in India and Burma, leaving the Service in 1946 with the rank of Wing Commander. After a refresher course at the City General Hospital, he entered the Sheffield tuberculosis service in 1947 and worked in Sheffield as a chest physician until his death. He held resident appointments at Winter Street Hospital and Crimicar Lane Sanatorium and later worked at Nether Edge and Lodge Moor Hospitals, returning to Winter Street Hospital in 1960.

A most conscientious and devoted physician, he was a warm-hearted and kindly man who was held in high esteem by his colleagues, the nursing staff, and the many patients under his care. His courage, good humour, and devotion to duty, in spite of ill health in his later years, were an inspiration to those who had the privilege of working with him, and he will be greatly missed by all who knew him. The large congregation at a solemn requiem mass at St. Vincent's Church on September 22 gave some indication of the affectionate regard in which Dr. MacCarthy was so widely held. Our deep sympathy is extended to his widow and children.—W. J. W.

R. Y. STONES, O.B.E., M.C., M.D., M.R.C.P. F.R.C.S.Ed., D.P.H., D.M.R.E.

The death of Dr. R. Y. Stones at Mengo Hospital, Kampala, on September 16, at the age of 80 years, closes a medical career of great distinction and usefulness.

Robert Yelverton Stones was an outstanding student at the London Hospital, and after graduating M.B., B.S. in 1907 and gaining the D.P.H. in 1908 and the F.R.C.S.Ed. in 1910 he sailed for Africa in 1911 as a missionary of the Church Missionary Society. He first worked at Iyi Enu Hospital, Nigeria, and in 1913 was transferred to Old Caïro Mission Hospital in Egypt. During the first world war he was commissioned in the R.A.M.C. and served first in the near East and then in German East Africa, being awarded the Military Cross. At the end of the war he began missionary work again in Tanganyika, doing outstanding service in the famine at Dodoma in 1919. From Dodoma he went to Maseno in Kenya, near Lake Victoria, where he founded a hospital with Red Cross funds. Continuing to win academic honours, he proceeded M.D. in 1918 and took the M.R.C.P. in 1925 and the D.M.R.E. in 1930.

In 1924 he came to Uganda and joined Dr. (afterwards Sir Albert) Cook at Mengo Hospital, Kampala, the mission hospital which Cook had founded in 1897. Here he worked till 1939, latterly as medical superintendent, and was appointed O.B.E. in 1938 for his services. He returned to England in 1939, but could not reconcile himself to a quiet life at home. He joined the R.A.M.C. and was in Malta during the siege and stayed on afterwards for a time in charge of the King George V Hospital for Merchant Seamen.

After the death of his wife he felt the urge to return again to his work in Africa, and revisited first Nigeria and then Uganda. Although now in his seventies he resumed work at Mengo Hospital for a time, finally concentrating on ophthalmology, always one of his great interests. He was seeing patients at his eye clinics until the onset of his last illness. Always keenly interested in the work of the

Order of St. John of Jerusalem he was appointed first a Serving Brother and then an Officer of the Order. In his younger days he was a vigorous tennis player and swimmer, and also a pioneer motorist, having been a driver for at least 50 years.

Quiet and reserved, and a most modest man in spite of his professional distinctions, he only wished to use his talents for the greatest good, wherever he was, for he was a true and humble Christian. He was keenly interested in the advancement of African doctors and longed to see them taking their place in the different hospitals in which he had served. His uncomplaining patience in his last illness was characteristic of him, and it was fitting that he should end his days in the country for which he had done so much and in the hospital he had served for so long.

Vital Statistics

Industrial Accidents and Diseases

The number of workpeople (other than seamen) in the United Kingdom whose deaths from accidents in the course of their employment were reported in August was 85, compared with 90 in the previous month and 94 in August, 1960.

The numbers of cases of industrial diseases in the United Kingdom reported during August were as follows: lead poisoning 2, aniline poisoning 2, toxic jaundice 1, compressed-air illness 2, anthrax 1, epitheliomatous ulceration 10, chrome ulceration 48: total 66. There were no deaths.

Infectious Diseases

Areas where the numbers of notifications were high in the latest two weeks for which figures are available.

Dysentery	Week Ending	
	Sept. 16	Sept. 23
Lancashire	76	93
Liverpool C.B.	19	25
Worsley U.D.	12	14
Yorkshire West Riding	21	44
Leeds C.B.	12	11
Dearne U.D.	0	11
Glasgow	91	83
Dundee	33	27
Edinburgh	22	21

Acute Poliomyelitis

Lancashire	16	17
Liverpool C.B.	6	4
Manchester C.B.	0	3

Food Poisoning

Lancashire	73	67
Blackpool C.B.	35	32
London	29	38

Graphs of Infectious Diseases

The graphs below show the uncorrected numbers of cases of certain diseases notified weekly in England and Wales. Highest and lowest figures reported in each week during the years 1952-60 are shown thus -----, the figures for 1961 thus ———. Except for the curves showing notifications in 1961, the graphs were prepared at the Department of Medical Statistics and Epidemiology, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

